



BLM - ALASKA

FRONTIERS

News about BLM-managed
public lands in Alaska

ISSUE 84 WINTER 2002

Thirty days at GROUND ZERO



Special Report

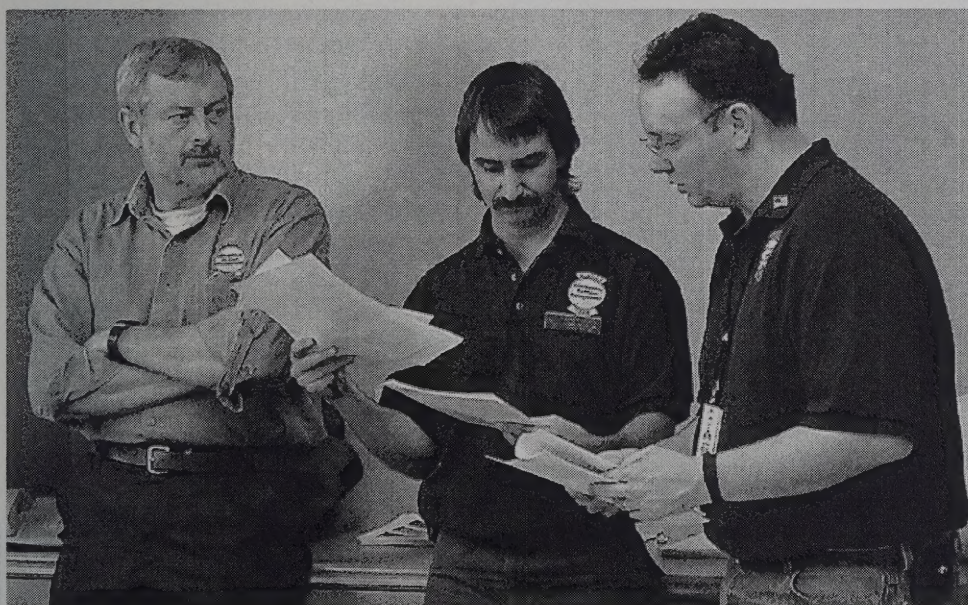
Alaskans lend a hand to help a city recover

"You find yourself talking in hushed tones because you feel you're at a burial ground, and you truly are," explained Joe Stam, commander of Alaska's Type I Incident Management Team. The memories, sights, sounds, smells, and images team members brought back with them are something they say they'll never forget.

"This is the assignment we'll remember for the rest of our lives," said deputy commander Dave Dash.

The interagency team, Alaska's only Type I disaster management team, normally coordinates wild-land fires, where they might set up a command post in a pasture and sleep in tents. The assignment in New York, where they helped emergency responders cope with the huge disaster of 9/11/01, was different in many ways.

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(top) The remains of the trade center soon became known as "The Pile."
(below) Incident commander Joe Stam, plans section chief Randy Lenon and computer specialist Brian Lamb discussing the day's operations.

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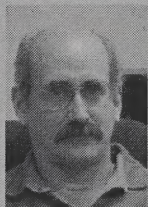
Ground Zero *continued*

The Alaska team assisted with planning and financial accounting for the Fire Department of New York to keep operations progressing at ground zero and to help New Yorkers work their way through the tragic event. The team was a small cog in a big machine, but it clearly showed the effectiveness of the Incident Command System goes far beyond wildfires.

National interagency Incident Management Teams were dispatched within hours of the Sept. 11 attack. Two were assigned at the World Trade Center and one at the Pentagon. When one of the teams came due for rotation, the Alaska team was next on the list. The team's 34 members are from federal, state and local agencies throughout Alaska. They flew to New York City to begin their 30-day assignment Oct. 8.

The team compiled daily action plans to outline incident objectives, facilities and locations, accomplishments, and actions planned for each shift. The team also managed a 72,000-square-foot warehouse at Pier 36 on the southeast end of Manhattan and three other caches at the site. Team members kept track of tools and equipment for recovery workers and logged body parts and personal items found at the site.

Their work brought them in contact with many of the people who had suffered the most in the tragedy: the New York Fire Department, the New York Police Department and the Port Authority Police Department. "We heard so many stories of pain, joy, and sorrow. In essence I felt like an undercover psychologist each shift as I listened and tried to provide encouraging words of support to those who survived,"



Alaska Type 1 Team changes commanders

(left) Dave Dash

The New York City assignment capped a five-year tenure for Incident Commander **Joe Stam**. The Alaska Team had nine assignments under Stam, who is chief of Fire Operations for the Alaska Division of Forestry.

Dave Dash, chief of Fire Operations for the BLM Alaska Fire Service, replaces Stam. Dash has been a member of the team since 1985 and says the Alaska Team benefits from the close-knit, relatively small community of firefighters found here. The Alaska Team is one of 16 such teams in the nation organized to respond to large wildfires and other emergencies.

Bill Beebe



Rescue workers search the debris for survivors following the deadly terrorist attack.

said computer data entry recorder Shawna Legarza, a North Star Crew Boss at the Alaska Fire Service. She also said she had to learn "to leave the intense emotional feelings, the things I saw, and the stories behind me when I left."

"We received truckloads of teddy bears, t-shirts and other things" donated by individuals and groups around the country, said logistics section chief Tony Doty.

"The people there really appreciated it," said finance section chief Lynn Standley Coe, "and knowing we were all the way from Alaska to help them—they were really wonderful to us."

The Alaska team left New York City on Nov. 9. The images the team brought back with them in their minds and in their memories will take some time to process as they return to their families and their jobs. Still, they say they felt honored to support relief efforts following the national tragedy.

"We felt when we were in New York City that we were representing all Alaskans, and we never forgot it," Stam said.

The team was honored for its recovery efforts at a special reception in Anchorage on Nov. 16 that was sponsored by the Governor's Office, the Municipality of Anchorage, and the Alaska Department of Natural Resources.

"We appreciate the recognition but we don't feel like heroes," Stam said during the reception. "The real heroes are back there still doing the job."

—Andy Williams/Teresa McPherson

Public comments on Alaska pipeline renewal EIS

If you want to talk, we're going to listen.

This is the message the Joint Pipeline Office (JPO) emphasized this summer and fall as it began work on an environmental impact statement (EIS) examining the renewal of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS) right-of-way. The team—led by the Bureau of Land Management and assisted by Alaska Department of Natural Resources staff members and contractors from Argonne National Laboratory—offered the public various ways to provide input during its scoping period.

Scoping is intended to give interested parties the chance to comment on a proposed action and to offer suggestions about the issues that should be considered in the EIS. The comment period closed October 19, 2001.

BLM and Argonne Laboratory representatives held public scoping meetings in Anchorage, Barrow, Delta Junction, Fairbanks, Glennallen, and Valdez in September and October.

In addition to the comments presented at public meetings, the renewal team also received comments by mail, e-mail, Internet, voice message, fax and tribal consultation. More than 230 people and organizations submitted comments.

More than 1,700 people participated in the scoping process by providing comments, requesting information, attending public meetings, or visiting the TAPS Renewal EIS Web Site (tapseis.anl.gov).

During the scoping period, 1,370 visitors made 2,411 visits to the web site. Comments fell into three broad categories:

- *Age and condition.*

After 25 years of use, some people questioned the condition of the pipeline system and offered recommendations to ensure that it operates safely in the future. Given the age of TAPS, some suggested that it be renewed for something less than the maximum allowable time (30 years).

- *Environmental impact.*

Some members of the public voiced concerns about past and potential environmental impacts to the air, water, wildlife, and wildlife habitat.

- *Social and economic impacts.*

Commentors were concerned about TAPS' past and future impacts on society and the local and national economy. Other concerns included impacts on subsistence, worker safety, public health, employment, government revenues, and the economic impacts to adjacent landowners

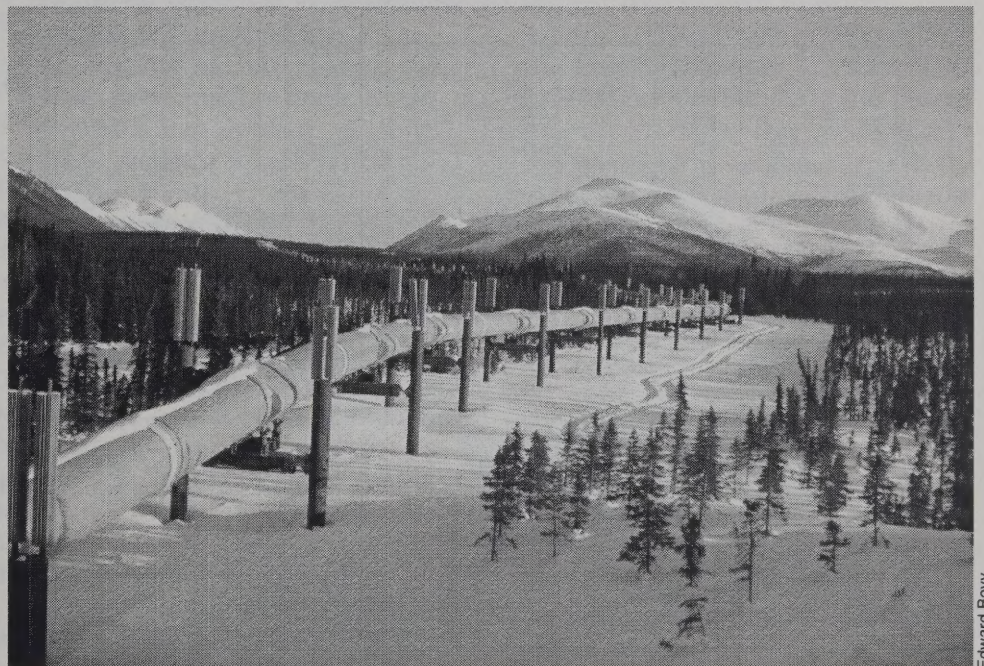
and to the oil and related support industries.

- *Accountability.*

People discussed how future pipeline operations could be more accountable to government and the public, and suggested additional audits, technical reviews, security measures, changes in the existing grant provisions, and new oversight panels or advisory groups.

To view the *Summary of the Public Scoping Comments, Trans-Alaska Pipeline System Right-of-Way Renewal Environmental Impact Statement*, visit the TAPS Renewal EIS Web Site (<http://tapseis.anl.gov>) or obtain a copy of the summary by contacting Rob McWhorter at 907-271-3664 or e-mailing a request to (tapswebmaster@anl.gov).

—Donna Gindle



The Trans Alaska Pipeline crossing the Brooks Range along the Dalton Highway.

Edward Bovy

The OTHER SIDE of NPR-A

The National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (NPR-A) is familiar to many of us for its sublime scenery and rocks that contain oil and natural gas. Recent leasing activities by the BLM has renewed interest in the area by oil companies and those concerned with the effects of development on the environment. What many don't realize is the reserve also contains metallic and industrial minerals including lead, zinc, silver, barite, and phosphate.

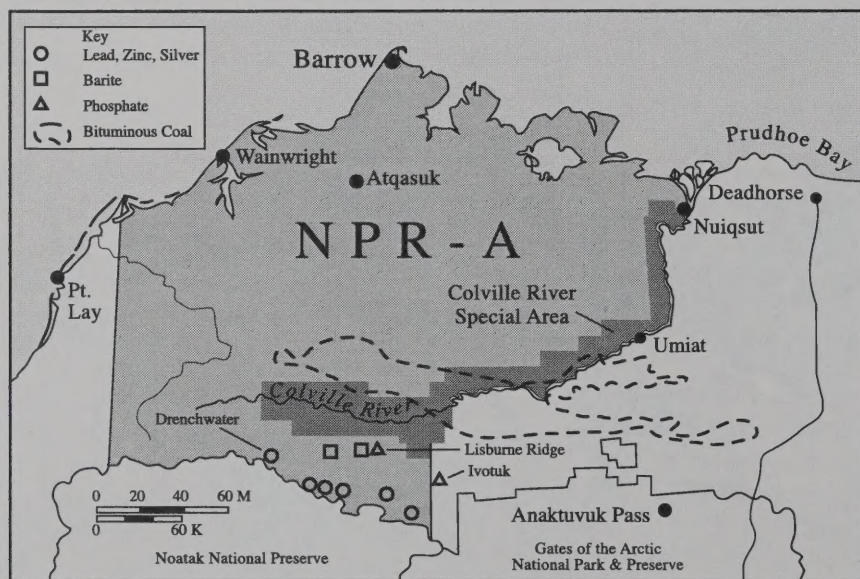
With this in mind, BLM State Director Fran Cherry, Northern Field Office Manager Bob Schneider, Deputy State Director for Lands, Minerals and Resources Nolan Heath, and Minerals Branch Chief Don Baggs toured parts of NPR-A this past summer. The group flew north across the rugged Brooks Range to Ivotuk in the

range's northern foothills. This airstrip, 340 miles north of Fairbanks, is left over from exploratory oil drilling efforts in the area and one of the few in southern NPR-A. Here they transferred to a helicopter to visit mineral occurrences located in a 70-mile stretch of rolling tundra-covered hills on the north side of the range. The flight crossed miles of remote country lacking roads and airstrips, giving the managers an appreciation for the remoteness of the southern NPR-A.

Special attention was given to the Drenchwater lead-zinc-silver occurrence as it lies within the same belt of rocks which host the world class Red Dog lead-zinc mine. Red Dog, located 40 miles west of the NPR-A boundary, is the world's largest zinc deposit. Drenchwater has the potential to contain additional reserves of these widely-used metals, but poor rock exposures make it difficult to determine the extent of mineralization. Drilling would be required to fully evaluate the deposit, but NPR-A is currently closed to drilling for locatable minerals.

The BLM has long considered the possible implications of opening the NPR-A to mining, but to do so would require congressional action. There are also other considerations. The north slope of the Brooks Range is very remote and rugged; also the area is highly scenic and natural in character. Streams which drain into the Colville River cut across the mineralized rocks at Drenchwater, so development of the deposit could potentially affect the river. In addition, the western arctic caribou herd makes yearly migrations through the area.

The team also examined lead-silver-bearing rocks near the crest of the De Long Mountains and a barite occurrence in the northern foothills. As at Drenchwater, the barite occurrences are cut by





Joe Kurtak

tributaries of the Colville River. Barite is a major ingredient in drilling fluid, a commodity required for drilling efforts such as those taking place in northern NPR-A and Prudhoe Bay.

Due to a lack of transportation in NPR-A, it is currently less expensive to import barite from as far away as China than to develop an Alaskan deposit. The barite deposits, like the lead-zinc-silver deposits at Drenchwater, have the potential to be large, but due to poor exposure, only drilling can determine size. Also as domestic resources run out, the U.S. is becoming more dependant on imported barite; at least two companies have examined the possibility of mining the deposits

should NPR-A be opened to mineral development.

The barite stop was especially exciting as the party encountered a curious grizzly bear, that was wondering what the group was doing in its territory. After what seemed like an eternity and some shouts of "hey bear," the bruin lost interest and ambled away.

Enroute back to Ivotuk, the group flew over Lisburne Ridge, an area with rich deposits of phosphate, a major ingredient in agricultural fertilizer. The U.S. is currently the world's largest phosphate producer and exports much of it to Asian countries. The Alaska deposits could supplement this dwindling resource. Also, Alaska is well positioned geographically to export resources to Asia. The phosphate deposits lie within the Colville drainage basin.

The Drenchwater Creek drainage has potential for lead and zinc deposits.

Time ran out before the group could tour some of the NPR-A's bituminous coal deposits. These reserves are estimated to exceed 300 billion tons, making this the largest coal reserve in North America. Coal-bearing beds follow the Colville drainage for some 150 miles, and like oil, have the potential to provide for the needs of an energy-hungry nation. As with the zinc, barite, and phosphate deposits, transportation in this remote area is a key factor limiting development.

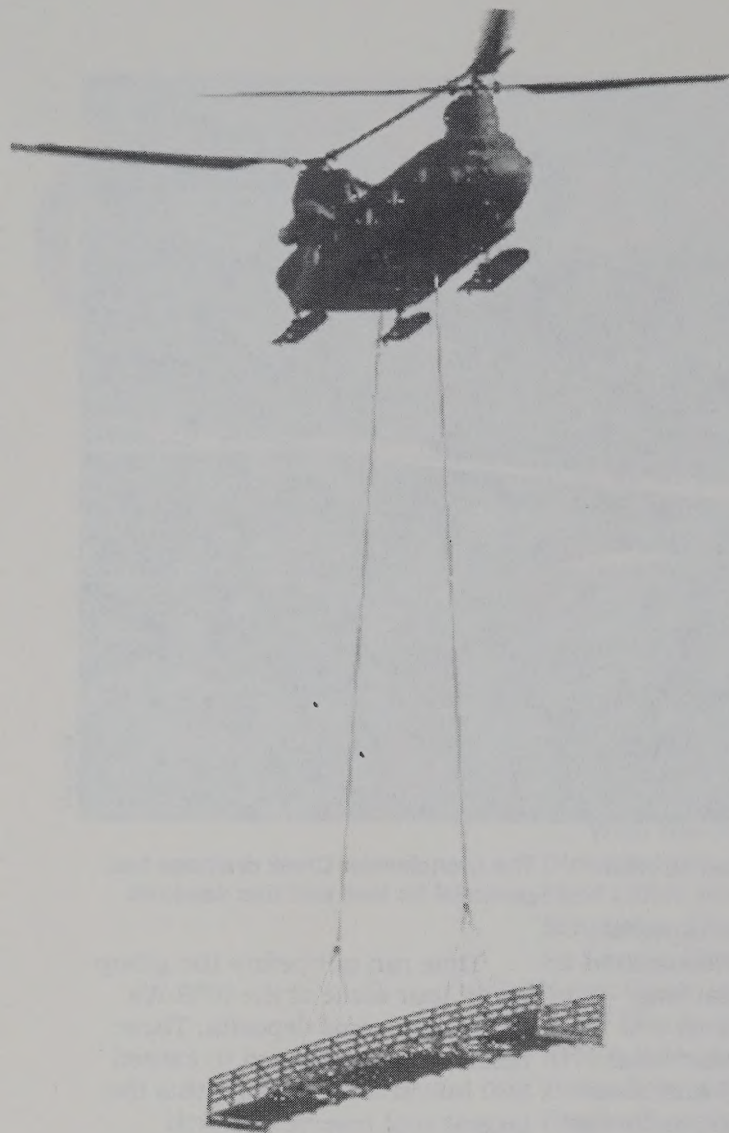
The group returned to Ivotuk with a better understanding of mineral resources in the southern NPR-A. Their newly-acquired knowledge of this seldom-visited area gives them a better idea how to find the balance between resource development and protecting the environment should the reserve ever be opened to mineral exploration.

—Joe Kurtak

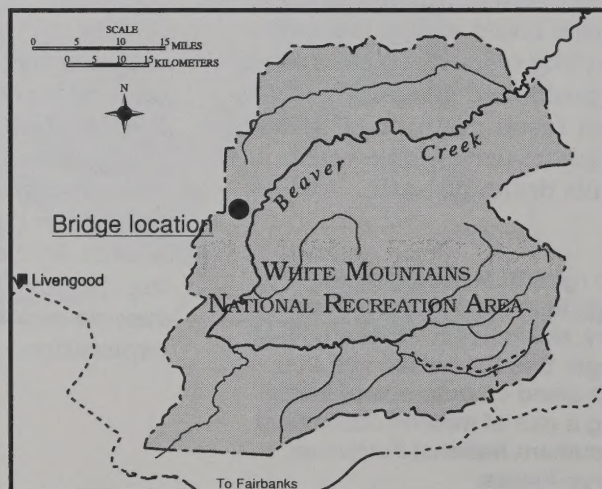


Joe Kurtak

(left to right) BLM geologist Joe Kurtak, BLM State Director Fran Cherry, Nolan Heath, Northern Field Manager Bob Schneider, and Don Baggs stand on outcrops of barite during a tour of mineral deposits in the southern National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska.



New bridge improves White Mountains access along Colorado Creek



Helicopter photo
by Diane Hunt

How do you move a 65-foot long, 12,000-pound bridge across 20 miles of roadless forest and bog?

That was the problem faced by Northern Field Office recreation planners and engineers this summer when they replaced a worn-out bridge on the Colorado Creek winter-use trail in the White Mountains National Recreation Area.

The replacement bridge was fabricated to NFO's specifications by Continental Bridge of Alexandria, Minnesota, and assembled by Alaska Fire Service crews at Fort Wainwright in Fairbanks.

Determining how to move the bridge fell to NFO recreation planner Randy Goodwin, who knows the White Mountains trails well. He realized that a winter overland move to the Colorado Creek bridge site would be impossible with such a long and heavy load.

"The trails weren't designed to move something so long," Goodwin said. "Moving the bridge by air was really the only option we could consider. But even if we left the bridge in several large pieces, the weight was too heavy for local commercial helicopters."

The solution lay across town at Fort Wainwright, home of the U.S. Army's 4-123d Aviation Regiment, nicknamed the "Sugar Bears." Known for their daring rescues on Mt. McKinley, the Sugar Bears fly heavy-lift helicopters that could move the bridge in one piece. They agreed to move the bridge under a special agreement where BLM can receive aviation support from the military when commercial aircraft is unavailable or incapable of completing the job.

On the morning of August 28, one of the Sugar Bears' CH-47D Chinook helicopters arrived over an Elliott Highway pullout where the bridge lay waiting on a flat-bed trailer. The helicopter descended, its powerful tandem

rotors kicking up a maelstrom of blowing dust, rocks and tree branches.

In the middle of the storm, Army Staff Sergeant Lance Smith and AFS helicopter specialist Bob McAlpin crouched on the bridge and connected cables to the helicopter hovering only a few feet above their heads.

McAlpin and Smith scrambled safely out of the way, and the cables grew taut as the helicopter's two powerful engines

slowly lifted the bridge into the air. The Chinook and its heavy load swung free of the truck trailer and headed toward Colorado Creek.

At the bridge site, a ground crew of NFO employees awaited what they knew would be a difficult installation. The helicopter arrived overhead and hovered in place as crew members attached guide ropes to the bridge's corners. Then the pilot inched the bridge over the creek.

Even with eight people and four

strong ropes, it was difficult to guide the long, swaying bridge onto the four-foot by four-foot foundations. The ground crew, yanked around the tundra by the 12,000-pound load, battled uneven ground, thick brush, and rotor wash so strong the tundra shook beneath their feet.

Finally, after about 10 punishing minutes, with the helicopter running low on fuel, the crew wrestled the bridge onto the foundations and gave the signal for the helicopter to release the cables.

After the Chinook had landed and stowed its gear, Sergeant Smith reflected on a satisfying mission.

"Usually we're hauling howitzers and infantry around," Smith said. "This was good training for both the pilot and the crew. It was an opportunity to go and do something for the public, to give them something they can use."

With snow already piling up in the White Mountains, the new bridge will soon be put to use by dogmushers, skiers, and snowmachiners. A few may stop and wonder how such a big bridge was placed so far from any road.

—Craig McCaa



Outdoor recreation planners Randy Goodwin and Collin Cogley put the finishing touches on the new Colorado Creek Bridge in January.

Craig McCaa

Make your reservation now for a night under the northern lights.



BLM maintains ten cabins in the White Mountains National Recreation Area. Cabins rent for \$25 per night Fridays and Saturdays or \$20 per night on all other nights.

Reservations can be made up to 30 days in advance on a first-come, first-served basis. Payment must be made at the time of reservation and is nonrefundable. Stays are limited to three consecutive nights per cabin. Cabins may not be reserved by commercial guides and outfitters.

Updated trail conditions are available at the BLM office in Fairbanks (1150 University Avenue) or by telephone at (907) 474-2372 (recording). For more information call (907) 474-2200.

Striking a balance

Citizen advisory council provides advice, feedback on BLM resource decisions

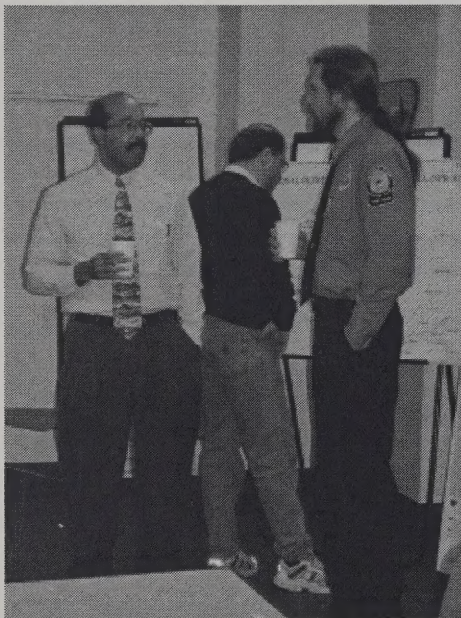
QUESTION:

What could a miner from Eagle, an Assemblyman from Fairbanks, a conservationist from Anchorage, and a Native corporation forester from Chickaloon possibly have in common?

ANSWER:

- a) concern for public lands
- b) a belief in citizen involvement in the management of public lands
- c) BLM's Resource Advisory Council
- d) all of the above

If your answer is "d," you win a free subscription to *BLM Alaska Frontiers*.



New advisory council members get acquainted: (left) Jim Posey, Director of Cultural and Recreational Services for the Municipality of Anchorage meets Steve Simmons (right), Director of Forestry for the Chickaloon Village Traditional Council.

The Alaska Resource Advisory Council, or RAC, is a 13-member citizen advisory board that provides advice and counsel to the Secretary of the Interior on issues related to the planning and management of federal public lands in Alaska.

The council meets with BLM managers four times a year to hear what the agency has accomplished over the previous quarter and provide feedback on land and resource management decisions.

"BLM has a long history of using public advisory boards to give citizens a say in how public lands are managed," explains BLM State Director Fran Cherry. "The RAC keeps me close to the public land user. I learn how they feel about the issues, what's important to them. And hopefully they learn why we do what we do and what multiple use means when you have competing interests."

BLM has other means of reaching interested publics and the public has a variety of ways to reach BLM. But according to council chair Gary Gustafson, "The RAC brings the two together to achieve a balance." And that balance helps BLM resolve competing demands at the grass roots level.

This type of public involvement is critical to successful land use planning. Recently the RAC participated in public meetings for a new land use plan for the north-west corner of the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (NPR-A). Council member Sandra Key is a public lands specialist for the Nature Conservancy of Alaska. Key accompanied BLM officials to public meetings on the North Slope to hear issues of concern

from the residents of Barrow and Nuiqsut.

Key said while the North Slope meetings weren't hugely attended, BLM staff spent plenty of one-on-one time with residents, listening to their concerns and answering questions about the planning process. Key also attended the Jan. 16 NPR-A planning meeting in Anchorage. "I'm impressed by the sheer complexity of planning for an area this vast," she says. "These are huge decisions, complex decisions. So much attention is paid to the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, people don't seem to grasp the significance of planning for an area as critical as NPR-A."

Energy issues are one of several topics the RAC has addressed in recent years. Other issues include wild and scenic rivers management, public easements, and off-highway vehicle policy for federal public lands.

Members of the council come from different backgrounds and represent diverse interests, but all are dedicated to building consensus on public lands issues. The council includes representatives from industry, conservation, Alaska Natives and the public at large. The current council includes nine reappointed members for continuity and four new members to bring fresh perspectives to the mix.

The council's next meeting is April 25-26 at BLM's Northern Field Office in Fairbanks. All council meetings are open to the public and include a public comment period. For information about the meeting or other council activities, contact the BLM at 907-271-5555.



Edward Bovy

The council gets a briefing on easements from BLM realty specialist Mike Haskins and land law examiner Susan Lavin during a recent meeting in Anchorage.

Meet your new BLM-Alaska RAC

The BLM-Alaska Resource Advisory Council members appointed for the two-year term that began October 2001 are:

Oil & gas, mining and commercial recreation

- * Charlie Boddy, Usibelli Coal Mine (Fairbanks)
- * Tom Crafford, consulting geologist (Anchorage)
- * Gary "Gus" Gustafson, BP Exploration (Anchorage)
- * Larry Taylor, miner/wilderness guide (Eagle)

Conservation, historic & dispersed recreation

- * Sandra Key, Nature Conservancy of Alaska (Anchorage)
- * Susan Olsen, Alaska Quiet Rights Coalition (Anchorage)
- * John Stroud, Environmental Systems Research Institute (Anchorage)
- * David van den Berg, wilderness guide (Fairbanks)

Elected officials, Alaska Natives, and the public-at-large

- * Larry Houle, Alaska Support Industry Alliance (Anchorage)
- * Jim Posey, Municipality of Anchorage
- * Paul Roehl, Bristol Bay Native Corporation (Anchorage)
- * Stephen Simmons, Chickaloon Village Traditional Council (Sutton)
- * Rick Solie, Jr., Fairbanks North Star Borough Assembly

—Teresa McPherson



Secretary of Interior appoints NPR-A Research and Monitoring Team

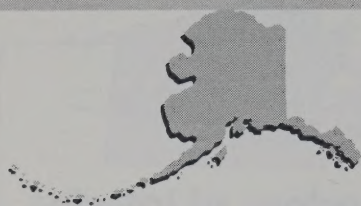
On January 15, Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton appointed nine members to a new NPR-A Research and Monitoring Team to advise BLM as oil field development progresses in the petroleum reserve. The team is composed of representatives from government, industry, academia and the public-at-large who will serve for the next three years.

"This is something we have been working towards for the past two years," says BLM northern field manager Bob Schneider. He says the team will:

- guide BLM research projects
- help BLM evaluate, review and refine lease stipulations
- review on-going and planned studies
- suggest improvements in studies undertaken by industry and academia to focus work on key questions of interest to BLM.

Members include:

- John Ford (*U.S. Dept. of Energy*)
- Robert Suydam (*North Slope Borough*)
- Dr. Dirk Derksen (*U.S. Geological Survey, Alaska Biological Science Center*)
- Dr. Eric Taylor (*U.S. F.W.S. Northern Alaska Ecological Services*)
- Dr. James Craig (*Minerals Management Service*)
- Joseph Hegna (*Philips Alaska*)
- Dr. Eric Rexstad (*University of Alaska Fairbanks, Institute of Biology and Wildlife*)
- Dr. John Schoen (*Audubon Alaska*)
- Richard Glenn (*Arctic Slope Regional Corporation*)



Frontier Flashes

NEWS FROM AROUND ALASKA

Thompson Pass: is there room for all?

"Will I still be able to find a quiet place to cross-country ski?"

"What will this do to the mountain goats and sheep?"

"This isn't going to mean BLM won't let me ride my snowmachine in the Thompson Pass anymore, does it?"

"Whatever you do, don't impose a lot of restrictions that will make it hard for someone else to start a new business in the future!"

Glennallen Field Office staff had their hands full before a packed Valdez meeting room last month, attempting to explain its environmental assessment of five commercial heli-ski guides (plus a commercial snowcat operation and the World Extreme Skiing Competition). The operators requested the opportunity to expand operations on state lands to BLM-administered lands north of Valdez and Thompson Pass. Sandy Dunn, a BLM Alaska State Office employee with a knack for facilitating meetings, helped sort through the misconceptions and conflicting points of view to distill the real concerns and issues and look for ways to mitigate potential impacts to other users of the area.

Following the meeting, BLM staff addressed one-on-one questions about land status and policies. "It was obvious that people were extremely interested in this issue for us to get such a good turnout during the busy holiday season," noted Glennallen Field Office Manager Ramone McCoy. "We've also had quite a few phone calls and office visits related to commercial and competitive winter use of the Thompson Pass in the winter."

Dunn later facilitated a meeting between BLM and a group of owners and representatives of the heli-ski permit applicants to consider mitigation of public concerns about heliskiing. Finding common ground among the group of highly competitive businessmen, each with a passion for realizing his unique vision for using public lands for this physically-demanding and aggressive sport, would be no easy task. But by the end of the afternoon, the operators were able to devise a scenario for safe, cooperative operations. They also resolved to organize a Thompson Pass Heli-ski Operator's Association to enhance communications and provide a consistently high-quality client experience.

"I think that this is a great example of how good business practices by BLM in working with its customers can lead to a win-win-win situation for the agency, commercial operators and other land users," commented McCoy.

—K. J. Mushovic

Thanks to the input of many thoughtful reviewers and stakeholders, the Record of Decision/Finding of No Significant Impact on the final revision of *Environmental Assessment AK-050-EA-01-022 For Commercially Guided Helicopter Skiing, Snowcat Skiing, and the World Extreme Skiing Competition in the Thompson Pass Area and Surrounding Public Lands* was signed by Glennallen Field Office Manager Ramone Baccus McCoy on December 31, 2001.

Web-watch

BLM's Type 1 team website was developed last summer to help people get information quickly about the projects the team was involved with. It goes "on line" whenever the team is active. Last fall it provided a dramatic insight into their efforts to aid New York City and received more than 4,000 hits in one month. (*see story below*)

BLM's websites and email remain off-line to the public by order of a U. S. court hearing the Cobell vs Norton lawsuit. Other Interior Department agencies are also affected due to concerns about the possible vulnerability of Indian trust lands data to hacking.

BLM regrets the inconvenience. When will internet service will be restored? No one knows.

NPR-A comment period extended

Comments on the new BLM planning effort for ten million acres in the northwest corner of NPRA will now be accepted through February 15, 2002.

BLM held public "scoping" meetings in Wainwright and Atkasuk in December, and Fairbanks and Anchorage in January. Meetings have also been scheduled for Point Lay and Anuktuuvuk Pass.

Dig 'Em Deep

No, these guys didn't lose their car keys in the outhouse and decide to move the structure to dive in after them. But seasonal employees Cory Larson, Heath Emmons, and Denton Hamby provide a frame of reference for the depth of a new pit for the outhouse at the Gulkana River Canyon Rapids portage.

The outhouse is so heavily used that it must be relocated every two or three years. It's no easy task due to permafrost in the area. During the 2001 season, the Glennallen Field Office experimented with the placement of a portable outhouse on the Main Stem. The portable outhouse mostly met with public approval and it may return in 2002.



Marcia Butorac

Gulkana National Wild River planning update

The Gulkana National Wild River may be silent and frozen right now, but river planning is once again flowing ahead.

Since joining the Glennallen Field Office in July, land use planner Bruce Rogers has immersed himself learning river issues and studying the results of the river and trail user surveys completed in 2000. These and other surveys from users randomly-contacted in 1999 reveal opinions about the river and nearby trails, user experiences, and preference for management options.

Rogers is using this material along with information gathered from public meetings and other sources to identify a range of alternatives for indicators, standards and management actions on the river. The State of Alaska and the Ahtna Alaska Native Corporation are cooperating in the project.

Glennallen Field Office Manager Ramone McCoy says a draft document with a preferred alternative will be available for review and discussion at public meetings

to be scheduled in February or March. The preferred alternative will have to undergo an environmental analysis; whatever is decided would not take effect until 2003.

Since the planning process took longer than anticipated, the temporary, three-year moratorium on new commercial operations on the Wild River corridor ended Sept. 30, 2001. Applications for the 2002 season were accepted through Feb. 1.

Also in the works for 2002 is, in cooperation with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, the construction of a fish counting tower to be located about one mile upriver of the confluence of the West Fork on the Main Stem. The proposed tower is currently undergoing environmental analysis. If approved, it would be used to obtain more accurate fisheries data than currently available. The tower would be manned by two alternating three-person crews 24-hours per day during June and July for the next five years.

"We are committed to completing and implementing a management plan on the Gulkana that will benefit the resource and yet allow people to enjoy the river," notes Rogers. "This plan will be a direct reflection of your opinions and concerns about the management of the Gulkana. The success of the plan in bringing about positive resource changes and in maintaining a quality recreational experience will depend on the actions of each and every user on the river as well as the administration and enforcement by BLM, the state, and Ahtna," he said.

If you want more information about Gulkana River management or to be included on the mailing list for these two projects, contact the Glennallen Field Office at (907)-822-3217.

—K. J. Mushovic

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(statewide wildfire information from the
Alaska Fire Service)

_____ NPR-A Update
(information about land use planning
for the National Petroleum Reserve and
the Colville River)

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BLM-Alaska Frontiers is published
quarterly in February, May, August
and November.

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